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SUBJECT: CLDP CONFERENCE, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EFFORTS BEAR
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¶1. On January 27, the Department of Commerce's Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP), in association with the Omani Ministry of Justice, brought together over 75 delegates from the U.S. and the Middle East to participate in a two-day "Commercial Law and Company Regulation" conference in Muscat. Judges, lawyers, and legal scholars from Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen shared experiences related to commercial law with their U.S. counterparts during the event.

¶2. The Charge, Sheikh Ishaq bin Ahmed al-Busaidi, President of the Supreme Court of Oman, and David Bowsher, U.S. Commerce Department Deputy General Counsel, opened the conference. Participants discussed commercial law development and awareness, company law best practices, corporate governance regulation, lending law, insolvency and bankruptcy issues, commercial mediation, international contracting in Oman, and contract enforcement through arbitration. Both U.S. and regional experts delivered presentations, and a high level of discourse underlined the similar challenges faced when drafting commercial laws and adjudicating legal cases between businesses.

¶3. The conference received excellent media coverage and drew widespread praise from attendees, who found the well-organized event to be progressive and reform-oriented. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah al-Hinai, Minister of Justice, personally expressed to Bowsher his appreciation for the USG's interest in holding the event in Muscat. Muhktar al-Hinai, the Ministry of Justice's Director of Training, had high praise for CLDP, and expressed to Econoff, "This conference was great. We really look forward to working more with CLDP on commercial law assistance programs."

¶4. Comment. After laying extensive groundwork, CLDP efforts in Oman are now paying dividends. The conference proved to be invaluable in cementing a solid working relationship with the Ministry of Justice. Ministry officials are excited about what CLDP can offer in terms of technical assistance, and the Embassy believes that continued CLDP efforts will advance the development and enforcement of laws based on international legal standards in efforts to promote commerce.

¶5. Furthermore, in separate meetings with the Capital Market Authority and the Information Technology Authority, CLDP was able to secure additional commitments to review pending revisions to Oman's company law, capital market law, insurance law, and e-commerce law. Through the efforts of CLDP, and with funding from MEPI, legal reforms are now on track to be reviewed according to internationally-accepted best practices. End Comment.
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